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ABSTRACT

College students are engaging in a form of destructive behavior known as binge drinking. The Harvard University College Alcohol Study defines binge drinking as consuming five or more drinks in a row for males and four or more drinks in a row for females. This Join Together packet provides tips, and resources to help professionals undertake initiatives to reduce alcohol consumption among college students. It lists national organizations, publications, and the names of community leaders who have expertise in drinking among college students. It also contains stories of how some communities have responded to this problem. (JDM)

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COLLEGE BINGE DRINKING

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Technical Assistance Packet

Join Together:

A National Resource for Communities Fighting Substance Abuse and Gun Violence

www.jointogether.org/

April 2000

Description of the Issue

College students engage in some destructive behaviors including drinking. According to the Harvard University College Alcohol Study, binge drinking is defined as the consumption of five or more drinks in a row for men and four or more drinks in a row for women. Binge drinking has become a common behavior among many college students.

What follows is a list of national organizations, publications, community leaders with an expertise in college binge drinking, and community stories.

National Organizations

Higher Education Center for the Prevention of Alcohol and Other Drugs

This is the nation's primary resource center for assisting institutions of higher education in developing and carrying out alcohol and other drug prevention programs on their campuses. They also provide technical assistance, training, publications, and a web site.

55 Chapel Street, Newton, MA 02158-1060; Tel: 800-676-1730 or 617-969-7100; Eml:

HigherEdCtr@edc.org; www.edc.org/hec

AMA Binge Drinking Project "Matter of Degree Program"

A Matter of Degree: The National Effort to Reduce High-Risk Drinking Among College Students is a seven-year program designed to foster collaboration between participating universities and the communities in which they are located to address this important public health issue and improve the quality of life for all community residents. *A Matter of Degree* works to identify the environmental factors such as alcohol advertising and marketing, institutional policies and practices, local ordinances—even social and cultural beliefs and behaviors—that converge to encourage alcohol abuse, and work together to create positive changes.

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The Harvard School of Public Health College Alcohol Study (CAS)

The Alcohol Study is an ongoing survey of 15,000 students at 140 four-year colleges in 40 states. The College Alcohol Study studies examines high risk behaviors among college students such as heavy episodic or binge drinking, smoking, illicit drug use, gun possession, violence and other behavioral social and health problems confronting today's American college students. A number of studies and publications are available online.

College Alcohol Study, Department of Health & Social Behavior, Harvard School of Public Health, 677 Huntington Avenue, Boston, MA 02115; Eml: cfinn@hsph.harvard.edu; www.hsph.harvard.edu/cas/index.shtml

The Core Institute

The Core Institute is a not-for-profit organization that assists institutions of higher education in evaluating drug and alcohol prevention efforts. They offer both student and faculty/staff surveys including the Core Alcohol and Drug Survey, a 4-page questionnaire which can be used as a pretest-posttest measure of the effectiveness of campus-based prevention programs. They also offer publications, statistics and data, and technical assistance services.

Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Studies, Student Health Programs, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, Carbondale, IL 62901; Tel: 618-453-4366; Eml: coreinst@siu.edu; www.siu.edu/departments/coreinst/

The *National Clearinghouse on Alcohol and Drug Information (NCADI)* is the nation's largest repository of alcohol, tobacco and other drug information. They offer a host of information for youth, parents, schools and community leaders on how to prevent and reduce underage drinking. Materials include the results of the latest studies and surveys, helpful guides, videocassettes, pamphlets and brochures from the Public Health Service. Many of these materials are available in bulk quantities and free of charge.

PO Box 2345, Rockville, MD 20847-2345; Tel: 800-729-6686; Eml: info@health.org; www.health.org

Publications and How to Order Them

The publications listed here are both free and of modest cost.

- *The following Join Together publication is available online at www.jointogether.org/publications or by calling Join Together at 617-437-1500:*
 - 1998 Monthly Action Kit: Binge Drinking On College Campuses
This kit offers action steps for students, school administrators and community leaders on how to reduce binge-drinking and related problems among college students. It takes a community-wide approach to address this serious problem. The kit includes facts and statistics, resources, examples of what others have done and a sample op-ed for inclusion in local newspapers.

- *The Catalyst*
This quarterly newsletter from the Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention, can help keep you up on the latest strategies regarding alcohol and other drug prevention on college campuses. Current and back issues can be found at www.edc.org/hec or by calling the Center at 800-676-1730 or 617-969-7100.

- *Environmental Management: A Comprehensive Strategy for Reducing Alcohol and Other Drug Use on College Campuses*
Environmental Management articulates the philosophy of the Higher Education Center and presents a comprehensive strategy based on lessons learned from prevention research, public health, and case law. It examines the three spheres of action in which to work for environmental change: the campus task force, the campus and community coalition, and associations of higher education officials, especially college presidents. The conceptual framework is designed to help college officials understand the wisdom of broadening their approach beyond traditional prevention programs to include a range of strategies for changing the campus and community environment in which students make decisions about drinking and other drug use. To order or for further information contact the Higher Education Center at www.edc.org/hec or by calling the Center at 800-676-1730 or 617-969-7100.

- *College, Alcohol & Choices: An Essential Conversation Guide for Parents and Students*
This publication guides students and their parents through a series of challenging conversations about the serious problem of alcohol use among college students. For more information, contact The Wisconsin Clearinghouse for Prevention Resources, University Health Services at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1552 University Avenue, Madison, WI 53705-4085; Tel: 800-248-9244; Fax: 608-262-6346; Eml: wchpr@www.uhs.wisc.edu; www.uhs.wisc.edu/wch/index.html.

- *Members' Handbook Strategies for Preventing Alcohol and Other Drug Problems on College Campuses: Faculty*
This publication describes how faculty members can become involved in efforts to address drinking problems at colleges and universities. It provides resources and tables on recent Alcohol and Other Drug use by students. To order a free copy, contact the National Clearinghouse on Alcohol and Drug Information at 800-729-6686 or www.health.org.

- *Alcohol and Drugs on American College Campuses: A Report to College Presidents-Third in a Series 1995, 1996, and 1997 (published 1998)*
This report provides data from 197 diverse American colleges for the years 1995, 1996, and 1997, separately. The report was designed for dissemination to administrators and anyone who is fighting the war on alcohol and other drugs on college campuses. Highlights from the report include usage rates, campus violence, substance use-related consequences, students' perceptions, and the campus environment. To order a copy for \$9.95 each, contact The Core Institute, Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Studies, Student Health Programs, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, Carbondale, IL 62901, by calling 618-453-4366, online at www.siu.edu/departments/coreinst/, or by email at coreinst@siu.edu.

National and Community Leaders

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Community Stories

Stories listed below are reprinted from Join Together Online. Similar stories can be found at www.jointogether.org.

Partnership for Prevention: Developing a Community and Campus Coalition to Reduce Collegiate Alcohol Abuse

The Pennsylvania State University and the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board have joined together in a partnership to address use and misuse of alcohol among youth. The partnership will include the development of intervention and prevention programs that focus on promoting responsibility and citizenship regarding the use of alcohol. The alliance began with the sponsoring of a statewide conference that included representatives from Penn State and the local community towards developing community teams to plan and implement strategies that address alcohol misuse and abuse among college and underage youth. For more information, contact Dr. Judith Vicary, Professor of Biobehavioral Health at 315 Health and Human Development Building East, University Park, PA 16802, or via e-mail at jrv@psu.edu.

Committee on University and Community Relations

This task force, developed by University of Albany and the City of Albany, has been a successful forum for bringing open and honest discussions around both common and controversial quality of life issues to the table. Initiatives address personal, property, and fire safety issues; rights, responsibilities, and behavioral expectations of off-campus student housing relations; and cooperative identification and tracking of neighborhood disturbances in conjunction with the Albany Police Department and Neighborhood Associations. One program distributes door tags that inform students living off-campus of laws and ordinances that come into play in hosting a party in their apartment. The Cooperating Tavern program brings local hospitality businesses,

enforcement agencies, and university students and officials together to support responsible and lawful consumption of alcoholic beverages, appropriate civil behavior of patrons, and responsible promotions and advertisement of non-alcoholic beverages and food specials. For more information contact Thomas L. Gebhardt, Director of Personal Safety and Off-campus Affairs, Campus Center 110, SUNY at Albany, 1400 Washington Ave, Albany, NY 12222 or via e-mail at camtlg@safnet.albany.edu.